

H.R. 4297. The Republican bill provides tax cuts for the wealthy few in our society by slashing critical services for vulnerable Americans and adding to our already exploding deficit.

I am appalled that the majority party has slashed food stamps, health care and student loans for vulnerable and middle-income families to pay for tax breaks for the Nation's most fortunate. The top priority—63 percent of the spending—in the Republican tax reconciliation bill is to extend capital gains and dividend tax cuts from 2008 to 2010.

Forty-five percent of the benefits of this provision will go to millionaires. In addition, this bill, even combined with the devastating cuts, will add \$81 billion to the deficit over the next 10 years.

The Republican bill focuses on benefits for their wealthiest contributors and fails to address tax changes that are necessary for the middle class. This bill does not include a provision to protect families from tax increases from the alternative minimum tax. I supported the 1-year fix on the AMT that this House passed because this is a critical issue for families in my district. However, this provision should have been included in this reconciliation package and should have been a priority for this Congress.

In total, the Republican reconciliation package includes tax increases of up to \$3,640 for middle income families due to the alternative minimum tax, increases of \$5,800 per student for their college education, and a loss of access to health care and nutrition for many struggling families. It also adds to a spiraling deficit already projected to reach \$640 billion by 2015. At the same time, Republicans will provide an average tax break of \$32,000 to the wealthy few. This is an outrage and should be an embarrassment for this Congress.

Mr. Speaker, America can do better. Congress should put forward a budget that is fiscally responsible, prioritizes our families, and does not threaten our children and grandchildren's future by increasing the Federal deficit.

I urge my colleagues to reject this irresponsible, immoral budget plan.

HONORING A WORLD WAR II HERO

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2005

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Sherman Dickholtz, a World War II hero, beloved husband and father, and valued member of the Illinois legal community. Mr. Dickholtz passed away on Saturday, December 3, 2005 at the age of 80.

As a member of the 17th Airborne Division, Sgt. Dickholtz distinguished himself as an infantryman, paratrooper and parachute rigger. He participated in campaigns in France and Germany including Operation Varsity, the last full-scale airborne drop of the World War II. On March 24, 1945, he and the other members of the 17th parachuted behind enemy lines east of the Rhine River, and capture key points in order to assist the advance of ground troops. Sgt. Dickholtz was awarded the Bronze Star for gallantry and meritorious service.

Upon his discharge from military service, Mr. Dickholtz went on to graduate from John Marshall Law School, working his way through school by driving a taxi for the Vets Cab Company. At that time, veterans were not able to obtain taxi medallions, and Mr. Dickholtz participated in a protest "cabalcade" of taxis from Chicago to Washington, DC to protest. Mr. Dickholtz gained national recognition for his participation when his picture was published in newspapers across the country.

Mr. Dickholtz had a successful career as an attorney, and in October of 2005 was conferred the title of Senior Counselor by the Illinois Bar Association. He was also a member of and proctor for the American MENSA Society.

Mr. Dickholtz's wife Darlene was not only legal secretary and office manager for her husband, but also his best friend. Together they raised seven children in a very busy and loving home.

Mr. Dickholtz was the proud grandfather of 10 grandchildren and two great grandchildren. His family has continued his legacy of service and success in both the public and private sectors. Mr. Dickholtz will be dearly missed by his family and community. I am privileged to pay tribute to this great American.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3199, USA PATRIOT IMPROVEMENT AND REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. TOM COLE

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2005

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, I rise today to explain my vote against a democrat motion to instruct conferees on December 14, 2005.

Although President Bush and Secretary Rice have made it clear that under no circumstance will the United States use torture, I am also sympathetic to Senator McCain's wish to establish a clear set of rules to govern interrogations of persons under the detention of the Department of Defense. With this said, I don't believe it is beneficial to instruct conferees on an issue that is already under negotiations between the White House, Senator McCain and the United States House of Representatives. These negotiations could yield a much more favorable outcome than what Senator McCain originally requested and it also undermines the legislative process. However, if no compromise is agreed to, I would support the McCain language as our policy toward torture.

IN MEMORY OF MIKE KOUNTOURIS

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2005

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, on December 4, 2005, a dear and beloved member of the Jackson, Mississippi community passed away.

Mike Kountouris has been as much the landmark to Jackson as his famous restaurant

the Mayflower Cafe, where he had worked since 1935.

An immigrant from Greece, Mike and his family lived the story of America. They came to this land and worked hard to become honored citizens. Mike served in World War II, fighting in the United States Army in his home country of Greece where he was wounded and awarded the Purple Heart. He and his family—those before him and now his children—poured their sweat and passion for life into their family business. The Mayflower has been for generations a place where families and celebrities, politicians and journalists, the young and old have come for good food and fellowship. From first dates to wedding anniversaries, Mike made this a center of the Jackson community by making family the focus of his business.

Mr. Speaker, Mike began his journey in this world on the island of Patmos and we in Mississippi were blessed that he ended the journey not only in Jackson, Mississippi, but the hearts of his family, friends and customers. I take this time to remember Mike Kountouris and to remind my fellow Mississippians of the impact that one man can have on a community. He was a special man that we will all miss.

RECOGNIZING THE WOMEN OF TOMORROW MENTOR AND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2005

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize the Women of Tomorrow Mentor and Scholarship Program, an incredible organization located in my Congressional district, and congratulate its founders, Jennifer Valoppi and Don Browne, for being named recipients of Governor Jeb Bush's Points of Light Award.

This award is the State's highest honor given to those who dedicate themselves to the Florida community through acts of volunteerism.

Since its inception in 1997, the Women of Tomorrow Mentor and Scholarship Program has been a pioneer institution for inspiring at-risk young women to achieve their fullest potential through education and job training.

As a result of the organization's efforts, young women throughout our community can receive positive guidance and mentoring from professional women in South Florida.

The Women of Tomorrow Mentor and Scholarship Program is a perfect example of individuals uniting to improve the lives of our community's youth, and I am proud of all those who are associated with this remarkable organization.

HONORING MATTHEW SCOTT

HON. RICK LARSEN

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2005

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the heroism of a man